

June 20, 2008

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

Humboldt County Public Works Department and Trinidad Rancheria – Trinidad Scenic
Drive Rehabilitation and Realignment
WDID No. 1B08056WNHU

Humboldt County

On April 1, 2008, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Trinidad Rancheria and the Humboldt County Public Works Department (applicants), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities related to the proposed Trinidad Scenic Drive Rehabilitation and Realignment Project near Trinidad, Humboldt County. The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with unnamed tributaries to the Pacific Ocean in the Big Lagoon Hydrologic Area No. 108.10.

The proposed project is located along Scenic Lane, a two-lane road that parallels the west side of Highway 101 between Trinidad and Westhaven. The proposed project will begin approximately 250 feet north of McConnahas Mill Creek and will end approximately 50 feet south of the driveway to the Cher-Ae-Heights casino facility. The City of Trinidad owns the right-of-way for the northern 450 feet of the project area and Humboldt County owns the right-of-way for the southern 1,700 feet of the project area.

Scenic Drive was built on the face of a steep bluff adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. Slope instability and bluff erosion have damaged portions of the roadway. The existing roadway alignment in the project area does not meet current design standards for horizontal and vertical curvature, and there are areas with significant slope erosion and slippage. The proposed project activities include the repair and stabilization of roadside areas, drainage improvements, repaving, shoulder widening, and guardrail installation. The southerly 600 feet of roadway will be realigned and reconstructed to meet Federal Highway Administration geometric design standards for horizontal and vertical curvature.

The proposed project has been divided into seven sites. Proposed activities at each site include the following:

Site-1: This section of road is slumping due to seepage from a cut bank. A new rock buttress composed of quarter-ton rocks will be constructed along the lower portion of the cut bank. A small drainage channel on the east side of the road will be paved. Approximately 125 linear feet of existing vegetated drainage channel will remain at the downstream end of the paved channel to provide a natural buffer for storm water runoff that enters McConnahas Mill Creek.

Site-2: A section of the road shoulder on the west side of the road has a slipout and the existing rock and wire retaining wall is failing. The existing retaining wall will be removed and replaced with a mechanically stabilized earth retaining wall. A new guardrail will be installed above the retaining wall. Activities at this site will be conducted within the roadway prism and will not impact McConnahas Mill Creek.

Site-3: A subsurface interceptor trench and curtain drain will be installed under the road. The purpose of the trench is to intercept subsurface water and accelerate drainage under the road.

Site-3 and Site-4: A portion of the drainage channel on the east side of the road is lined with asphalt that covers and protects a buried water line. The channel is undersized and will be regraded and repaved with asphalt. The unpaved portion of the drainage channel between the paved section and McConnahas Mill Creek will not be changed and will continue to provide a natural buffer for storm water runoff that enters McConnahas Mill Creek.

Site-4: The existing subsurface drainage facilities on the east side of the road, which includes a network of 30-inch diameter plastic and metal pipes, and associated junction box and inlets, are in poor condition and will be replaced. A culvert inlet will be cleaned out and rock slope protection will be added for inlet protection. An abandoned cross-culvert and drop inlet will be removed.

Site-5: A section of the road shoulder on the west side of the road has experienced a slipout. The slipout area will be repaired with an approximately 100-foot long and 8-foot high retaining wall.

Site-6: An approximately 180-foot long and 16-foot high retaining wall retaining wall will be installed on the west side of the road to accommodate an 18 foot horizontal shift in the roadway alignment. An existing 48-inch diameter culvert will be extended through the retaining wall and a rock energy dissipater will be added below the new outlet. Extending the existing culvert through the new retaining wall involves removing a 10-foot long section of the existing culvert and replacement with a 20-foot long culvert. A 10-foot long downdrain will be attached to the outlet to convey water to the bottom of the fill slope. Existing half-ton rock will be re-arranged at the outlet to create a rock energy dissipater. Proposed activities at Site-6 will result in 120 square feet and 30 linear feet of permanent impacts to an unnamed ephemeral stream.

Site-7: An existing drop inlet located on the east side of Scenic Lane at the bottom of the casino driveway will be repositioned to adjust to the new roadway profile. A new slotted drain will be installed adjacent to this drop inlet which collects storm water runoff that flows under the driveway. The culvert will be cleaned out but no other changes to the culvert are proposed. A rock buttress composed of one-ton rocks will be placed along the slope on the west side of the road to provide slope stability and to support the shifted roadway alignment. A portion of the rock buttress will permanently impact 50 square feet and 10 linear feet of an unnamed ephemeral stream.

The proposed project activities will result in permanent impacts to 170 square feet and 40 linear feet of ephemeral stream channel. The proposed project will not result in any temporary impacts to waters of the state. Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project. Noncompensatory mitigation includes revegetation of disturbed areas and the use of Best Management Practices for sediment and turbidity control.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit No.14, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. The applicant has applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game. Regional Water Board staff have determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Class 1, Section 15301 – existing facilities) and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption for this project.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicants' proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed project including maps and design drawings. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.